

# The Colored American

Published by THE COLORED AMERICAN Publishing Company

## A TIONAL NEGRO NEWSPAPER

Published every Saturday at 459 C St. N. W. Washington, D. C.

### SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

One year - - - \$2.00  
Six months - - - 1.10  
Three months - - - .60

INVARIABLY IN ADVANCE.

Subscriptions may be sent by postoffice money order, express or by registered letter. All communications for publication should be accompanied with the name of the writer—not necessarily for publication, but as a guarantee of good faith.

We solicit news, contributions, opinions and in fact, all matters affecting the race. We will not pay for matter, however, unless it is ordered by us. All matter intended for publication must reach this office by Wednesday of each week to insure insertion in the current issue.

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Reading notices 50 cents per line. Display advertisements, \$2 per square line per insertion. Discounts made on large contracts.

Entered at the Post-office as second-class matter.

All letters, communications, and business matters should be addressed to

THE COLORED AMERICAN,  
EDWARD E. COOPER, MANAGER

459 C Street Northwest.

WASHINGTON, D. C.

SATURDAY, MAY 5, 1900.

### OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

To deduce an intelligent opinion of what is best to be done when there is a conflict of interest and evidence among the most reputable people of a community, it is necessary to review all the facts in a candid and impartial spirit, and to wait until sentiment crystallizes to such a degree that the sober judgment of the masses can be distinguished, strong and clear, above the mazes of passion. For this reason we have studiously refrained from jumping pell-mell into this school controversy, until the heat of excitement had given place to calm reflection, and until the public mind was prepared to know definitely what was wanted to reform the abuses that had crept into our educational system—apart from the selfish interests of individuals or the consideration in any sense of small personalities. It is not to the point at this stage of the situation to take note of whose scalp is to be saved, or whose is to be taken. The main proposition just now is to save to the race at large the autonomy in the school management that has been earned by long years of able and honest administration.

Public meetings have been held in many sections of the District. Memorials have been filed with Congress, and the masses have spoken their minds freely on the issue at stake, and a conclusion admittedly representative of the "common sense of most" has been evolved. How nearly our wishes will be respected by the powers that be is a question not yet released from the realm of speculation.

The force of public sentiment upon the deliberations of the Senate Committee is well demonstrated by the significant concessions found in the bill actually passed, as compared with the document as originally drawn. While the Senate bill is greatly improved over the first draft, it is far from perfect, and does not carry with it the opportunities for Negro representation commensurate with our strength and importance in this community. The provision for two assistant superintendents, with the tacit understanding that one is to be colored, three clerks with

a like understanding, and seven members on the Board of Education, with our proportion placed at two, is pretty good as far as it goes, but it takes away the object lesson we now have in the form of self-government embodied in the separate head for the separate schools, without conferring any special benefit to take its place. If we must have separate schools here—contrary as it may be to the American spirit and economy—the Negro should be given all the advantages growing out of the system thus forced upon him, and be accorded every grade of recognition in the conduct of the system permitted him by his capacity and availability.

Upon this theory, those wisest among us have reached the position that there is no necessity for yielding until the battle is lost, for good and all, and that the agitation which has brought fruitful results up to this point, should be carried on with unabated vigor, until the law is finally passed and signed by the President. The Negro is in sympathy with the popular movement for reform in the educational system and for the centralization of authority, but there is nothing in the situation that calls for the abolition of the office of superintendent of the colored schools.

The 90,000 Negroes of the District of Columbia contend that the office, with its honors, powers and emoluments shall remain with us, now, henceforth and forevermore.

Self-confidence is half the battle in this age of merciless competition.

The educated man is not a whit better than the ignorant, except in so far as he utilizes his acquirements for good.

The downfall of the Philadelphia leader, John R. Brooks seems to have been simply the logical and inevitable end of a man who made a habit of living beyond his means.

A man can never understand how much trouble he can get into until he, like Dewey, permits himself to be led by a selfish woman, against his own better judgment or impulse.

An education which does not teach a youth to do the very best he knows how, wherever he is placed, in humble or exalted station, is apt to do him more harm than good. The way to get a chance to do better, is to do your duty well where you are.

The colored people in the United States are estimated to own real estate to the value of \$725,000,000. This is alright as far as it goes, and is encouraging, but it would be better still if a few millions were invested in live business enterprises.

We still have a fighting chance for a colored superintendent of the Washington schools and we should not abate one jot or tittle of our efforts until the new law is actually passed and signed by the President. We can manage our schools and we want the world to see us do it.

The Minneapolis Afro-American Advance meant well, but the esteemed Mrs. Duckett failed to keep up with the hot pace set by Washington banquetters, and hence got the Cooper and Chase dinners mixed up in delightful confusion. The banquet she describes was not ours, but the other one. See?

### OPERATIONS OF THE CENSUS BUREAU.

The Census is making unprecedented progress under the energetic direction of Gov. W. R. Merriam. The field work has been started a month ahead of the usual time, and an enlarged force is at work paving the way for the reports of the thousands of enumerators, who will canvass the country during the month of June. In moving the massive machinery of this Bureau, Gov. Merriam has the aid and co-operation of a corps of expert statisticians and scientific specialists, such as Assistant Director F. H. Wines, Chief Clerk Edward McCaulley, Appointment Clerk J. W. Langley, Mr. S. N. D. North, in charge of manufactures; Mr. L. G. Powers, in charge of agriculture; Mr. W. F. Wilcox, in charge of methods and results, and others not less well known.

Especially attention is being given the collection of statistics bearing upon the Negro and the showing to be made will go far to overrule the indictment brought against our capacity by antiquated fossils of the Tillman and Morgan type of misrepresentative Americans. Director Merriam is closely watching the result of his innovation along these lines, and is grateful to learn from the Negro press of the land that his efforts are meeting with universal approval at the hands of the Negro people. Bulletins have been sent out broadcast, instructing the farmers of the South and elsewhere how to answer the questions and make correct estimates of their holdings. He is gradually increasing the number of colored employees, and they are being assigned and promoted solely on the basis of merit, applying the same tests of fitness to all regardless of race or personality. More appointments and promotions will be made this month, and our quota will soon be brought up to a very comfortable notch. Throughout the country will be many colored enumerators, special employees, etc., whose work will reflect credit upon the Bureau, upon themselves and the race.

The Twelfth Census will mark the opening of a new era for the American Negro.

The only way to remedy the divorce evil is to remove the cause. More effective than increased difficulty in securing a separation would be to render it less easy to procure a marriage license. Hasty and ill-considered unions, followed by misconception of mutual obligations, lack of affinity and sympathy of thought make all the business for the divorce lawyer. Parents, ministers and teachers can help to instruct the young along right lines of conduct, but little is to be hoped from legislation to remove this blot upon our times.

Rev. C. M. Sheldon, author of "In His Steps," who successfully edited the Topeka, Kas., Capital for a week upon lines of strict Christianity and morality, purposes to devote his share of \$65,000 net profit made to beautify a Negro settlement of Topeka which is surrounded by the aristocratic sections of that city. This is probably Mr. Sheldon's idea of "What Jesus would have done," and to be consistent with his own arguments and writings, he makes a laudable effort to follow "In His Steps."

Senator Mason takes it for granted that this government meant what it said when the declaration was solemnly made that in the struggle to free Cuba, there was no intention to acquire one foot of her soil, and is therefore moving to have our troops withdrawn from the island. It is a trifle early to expect

perfect order in Cuba at this time, but the United States should not remain in control there any longer than is necessary to guarantee a stable government. People learn to manage their affairs by being permitted to manage, and even, if mistakes are made for a while they will come around alright eventually. A year more in Cuba will not do that country any harm and will enable the nation to do its whole duty by her struggling people.

Recently two young men walked five hundred miles from their South Carolina home to Tuskegee. Another walked nearly the same distance from Mississippi. Frequently boys reach there without a cent, and without clothes, merely to study at this fount of industrial education, having heard that no one who wishes to rise is ever turned away. Can a race fail as long as it can develop such a sturdy yeomanry as these ambitious youngsters represent.

Time continues to vindicate the wisdom of Booker T. Washington's advocacy of industrial education. If we would hold on to the commoner vocations, we must be prepared to do the work better and more quickly than those who are endeavoring to crowd us out of them. Denied a place at the apprentices' table, the industrial school must give us the necessary training. Not content with striking at our political rights, we are face to face with the fact that we must now begin to resist encroachments by trades' unions and individual competitors upon our right to work for our bread. While reaching for the higher walks, let us not forget to keep a firm grasp upon the humbler things that we have.

The Colored American has received a beautiful lithograph picture of "The Buildings and Grounds of Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute," Mr. Booker T. Washington, principal. The picture is a beautiful work of art, and is printed in twelve colors; it is 24x35 inches in size and gives a splendid view of this famous institution of learning. This picture is worthy of a place in any home in the land, and no Negro home ought to be without it. This lithograph may be had for sixty cents by addressing Mr. Booker T. Washington, Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, Tuskegee, Ala., and it is worth many times the price charged for it.

### SENATOR CHANDLER'S SUFFRAGE BILL.

Senator Chandler has by request, introduced a measure in the Senate, designed to prevent the denial or abridgment of the right of citizens of the United States to vote on account of color and providing penalties for the violation of the suffrage amendments to the constitution. There is no doubt of the bill ever being enacted into law, but we desire to give the New Hampshire statesman due credit for standing sponsor for the sentiment enounced in it. While any thought of carrying a single southern state for the republican ticket is the wildest sort of "rain bow chasing," no man outside of the lunatic asylum would dream of a republican Congress daring to seriously agitate the race question during presidential year in any way adversely to southern interests. As a "grand stand" display, Senator Chandler's bill is a brilliant spectacle, and reads well.

A Pittsburg jury gave Assistant District Attorney Billows, colored, who sued under the Fourteenth Amendment, a verdict for six and a quarter cents.